

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CAIRO 06695 071426Z

53

ACTION SCSE-00

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00

DOT-00 EB-07 FMC-02 INR-07 NSAE-00 CG-00 OFA-01

DLOS-04 SCA-01 OES-05 OC-05 CCO-00 PPTE-00 SSO-00

NSCE-00 INRE-00 PA-02 PRS-01 USIE-00 SAM-01 /059 W

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O 071400Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 5015

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON NIACT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY VALLETTA NIACT IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS CAIRO 6695

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CASC

SUBJECT: EXPLOSION ABOARD MERCHANT VESSELL MV NECHES

REF A. CAIRO 6663; B. CAIRO 6669; C. CAIRO 6673 (NOTAL)

1. MERCHANT VESSELL M/V NECHES, SUFFERED EXPLOSION NEAR PORT SAID APPARENTLY DURING EARLY MORNING HOURS OF JULY 7. SHIP APPARENTLY ENTERED RESTRICTED WATERS INADVERTENTLY AND IS BELIEVED TO HAVE STRUCK A MINE. AT LAST REPORT VESSEL AFLOAT AND STILL IN MINED AREA BUT WILL HAVE TO BE TOWED OUT. UNCLEAR AS YET WHO WILL ARRANGE OR DO TOWING.

2. GERMAN VESSEL REMOVED 18 CREW MEMBERS. ALL WELL AND UNHARMED AND PRESENTLY IN HOTEL ABU SIMBEL AT PORT SAID. OF THESE, ONE IS PORTUGUESE, ONE GREEK, ONE CHILEAN, ONE MAURITIAN, AND SEVEN BRITISH. SEVEN ARE UNITED STATES CITIZENS; STEVEN WILLIAMS, ROGER PERKINS, KEITH HALL, JIM SHEA, AL MARSTON, GEORGE PINKERTON/BULL AND WESLEY SLANINA. CREWMEN WERE ABLE TO REMOVE PASSPORTS AND PERSONAL POSSESSIONS BUT HAVE UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 02 CAIRO 06695 071426Z

NO READY CASH; ONLY CHECK BOOKS.

3. UNITED STATES CITIZEN CAPTAIN WILLIAM BARNES AND THREE OTHER US CITIZENS, JOSEPH EVENGROS, JACK ROSS AND STEVE FITCH, ARE STILL ON BOARD TOGETHER WITH DUTCH CITIZEN GERALD SPARENBERG. ALL ARE BELIEVED TO BE UNHARMED. LATEST REPORT GIVEN DAO WAS THAT GOE RELAYED MESSAGE TO PERSONS STILL ABOARD VESSEL THAT EGYPTIAN HELICOPTER WOULD PICK THEM UP AND FLY THEM TO SHORE IF DESIRED. NO RESPONSE SUPPOSEDLY RECEIVED TO DATE.

4. CONSULAR OFFICER HAS BEEN IN TOUCH WITH CAIRO REPRESENTATIVE LOCKHARDT OF GEOPHYSICAL SERVICES, INC. FOR WHOM NECHES ENGAGED IN SEISMIC WORK, TO INFORM HIM INCIDENT. LOCKHARDT IS ATTEMPTING INFORM LONDON OFFICE, BUT ALSO ASKS EMBASSY LONDON ADVISE ERIC FIRMIN, GEOPHYSICAL SERVICE, INC., CANTERBURY HOUSE, SYDENHAM ROAD, CROYDON, LONDON OF INCIDENT.

5. TELEPHONE SERVICES TO PORT SAID FREQUENTLY DELAYED. DAO AND CONSULAR OFFICER KEEPING IN TOUCH WITH THE USS OPPORTUNE PRESENTLY IN PORT SAID IN EFFORT OBTAIN UP-TO-DATE DATA. WILL ADVISE ANY DEVELOPMENTS.

6. FOR VALLETTA. CREW REPRESENTATIVE STEVE WILLIAMS IN PORT SAID ASKS THAT THOMAS & COMPANY AT 12 ST. CHRISTOPHER STREET, VALLETTA, MALTA BE INFORMED. GIVES NAMES THERE OF GEORGE SELLERS AND JOHN LOVELOCK, BUT SAYS THERE ARE OTHERS.
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